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26th November 1999

To: Andreas Whittam Smith
President of the BBFC
Soho Square, London

Sir,

SHORT AGE OF LICENSED SEX SHOPS FOR R18 VIDEO RECORDINGS

Further to your interesting article published in "The Spectator" earlier this month, I wrote to the Home Office about the lack of sufficient licensed sex shops to make the R18 category viable. I sent you a copy of that letter and I now enclose a copy of the unsatisfactory reply I have received dated 22nd November.

You should make direct representations to the Home Office about this problem. If it is not tackled soon, the huge and unique United Kingdom black market in "adult" video recordings will become an established, but illegal and unregulated, feature of the entertainment industry in this country, as James Ferman warned last year. British politicians lack the moral courage of their Continental counterparts and therefore need pressure before they will reform England's outdated sex laws. Local authorities are not permitted to set the number of other licences at nil. Singling out sex-shops for such treatment destroys the whole basis of regulation, thereby driving underground the material they are supposed to accommodate.

Yours faithfully,

Cllr E Goodman